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This is our second issue of IRRODL after celebrating our silver (25th) anniversary. It is notable how the field of open and distributed learning (ODL) has evolved. ODL was once a peripheral branch of education. Now open, distance, online, and distributed learning is increasingly a part of mainstream education.

IRRODL has benefited from, and been means to, this mainstreaming. As the profile of IRRODL has grown, so have the number of submissions. We are happy to have such strong interest from researchers and practitioners. We do want to clarify that IRRODL is a journal for open and distributed learning. We are highly interested in furthering research and discussion on open education, distributed learning, online, and distance education across the globe. But we are not an educational technology journal. Though ed tech and ODL overlap, they are not the same. There are [many excellent highly respected journals](#) for these research fields.

Mainstreaming of ODL has likely accelerated after the pandemic lockdowns made many educational institutions begin or increase their distance and online offerings. In this issue, there are papers related to the pandemic. The research paper by **Batista-Toledo** and **Gavilan** investigated the experiences during Covid of students and teachers in a blended format, what the authors call phygital (physical plus digital) university ecosystem. Interestingly, they identify students' mental health as an important challenge during the pandemic along with more familiar ODL issues such as digital tool proficiency and organizational barriers.

Faza and **Lestari** conducted a systematic review of self-regulated learning strategies, particularly after the shift to online learning due to Covid. The found that technologies (AI, LMS, MOOCs) can support self-regulated learning via personalized feedback and autonomous learning opportunities. **Sulkipani et al.** did a bibliometric analysis of online learning in civic education (OLCE). Though online learning has been used for Civic Education for decades, the authors did note that publications about OLCE increased immensely since 2021.

Readiness for e-learning is the focus of research by **Ramos**, **Lee**, and **Mabuan**. They study pre-service teachers in a HyFlex (hybrid, flexible) learning environment. They found that these pre-service teachers e-learning readiness and learning engagement is significantly related to their perceived learning performance. **Chang** and **Sun** studied in-service teachers preparing and designing MOOC lessons. They found teachers relied heavily on their early experience for their course design. **Anghel**, **Littenberg-Tobias**, and **von Davier** also studied MOOCs in a scoping review. They found that most existing studies measured teacher's attitudes and engagement with MOOCs with limited data analysis methods.

We know that ODL has ongoing challenges. Among them are concerns about dropout rates. **Ranasinghe et al**. identify reasons that contribute to dropout in ODL. The authors found that employed students were more likely to dropout. By identifying internal and external reasons for dropout (e.g., student characteristics and family commitments, respectively), this research can help inform solutions for student retention.

Open Education Resources and learning design are important solutions-based topics of ODL research. **Spencer et al.** compared how OER and commercial textbooks can help student's achieve learning outcomes. They found that commercial textbooks are fine for helping students achieve learning outcomes. But well-designed OER can help students reduce cognitive load and improve learning efficiency while also achieving learning outcomes. **Al Abri** and **Elhaj** explored practical guidelines for designing high-quality online courses. Their comprehensive literature identified important course components for supporting student engagement and learning. **Kalima et al.** used activity theory to study whether learning could be deepened for ODL students via tutoring in satellite learning centres called "field facilitation." They found that for field facilitation to be effective, it needs to be part of the curriculum rather than being an extra activity.

Kalimah reviews the book *AI for Teachers*. She believes the book is an accessible guide with foundational knowledge about AI without being too technical. As an open access book by and for teachers, it may be an important resource for educators. **Manik** reviews the very practical *Methods for Facilitating Adult Learning* by Coryell et al. She finds the book to be a valuable resource for educators looking for foundational theories and contemporary trends in ODL environments including art-based learning, e-portfolios MOOCs, and gamification.

Anderson reviews Cormier's book *Learning in a Time of Abundance*. Cormier investigates how education has been altered from its origins during a time of information scarcity. Cormier thoughtfully asks what learning means and how it operates now in a time of information abundance. Anderson finds that Cormier is not just incisive but quirky and engaging in his investigation.

In their Notes From the Field, **Heller** and **Leeder** remind us of the importance access and openness in ODL. They contend that research incorporating the experiences of distributed and under-represented populations are more likely to have greater local application.

In their research notes, **Levitan et al**. discuss how Covid affected educational access for Indigenous communities in Peru. They discuss how important it is to contextualize e-learning and educational resources to improve educational access for low-income students in remote regions. **Torres-Vergara et al.** conducted a bibliometric analysis of IRRODL over the past 25 years. They provide an overview of the journals development by using bibliometric indicators. They identify that the journal continues to attract diverse authors from institutions and countries across the world. Long may it continue.